

International Exhibition of Persian Art

1930

[Royal Academy, London]



INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PERSIAN ART

ROYAL ACADEMY, LONDON, January—February, 1931

PATRONS:

HIS MAJESTY THE KING

HIS MAJESTY RIZA SHAH PAHLAVI

Telegrams { *Inland*: Shiraftab Piccy London
 Foreign: Shiraftab London

Chairman
Sir Arnold Wilson
K.C.I.E. C.S.I., C.M.G., D.S.O.

5/6, CORK STREET,
LONDON, W.1

Telephone: Gerrard 7692

Secretaries-General
E. H. Keeling, M.C.
Major A. A. Longden, D.S.O.

No. U 1 dated 10th July, 1930

E. T. Newell, Esq.,
American Numismatic Society,
156th Street,
New York City.

Dear Sir,

I beg to enclose some particulars of this Exhibition.

Would it be possible for you to lend us some fine specimens of Achæmenian, Parthian and Sasanian coins? We would take the greatest care of them.

Various objects of Persian art are being sent from America, and if you would be so good as to lend us some coins they might perhaps accompany the other exhibits.

The selection of coins is in the hands of Mr. John Allan, of the British Museum.

Yours truly,

E. H. Keeling

Honorary Secretary-General

EHK/JH



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No. T 1 dated 10th July, 1930

Leigh Ashton, Esq.,
Victoria and Albert Museum,
S.W.7.

Dear Ashton,

Morshead writes:—"Binyon has made himself responsible for selecting any Persian books, bindings or drawings, which it may be desired to borrow for your exhibition. When he has made his selection I think you had better write me a plain, quite formal request for the loan of certain specified articles and I will obtain the King's permission for you.

"You probably know that Sir Cecil Harcourt Smith (62 Rutland Gate, S.W.7.) is the man to apply to, in case you should desire to make enquiries about other objects of Persian interest, such as carpets, pottery, etc. He is responsible for such objets d'art in all the royal palaces, and he would similarly make arrangements for the loan of anything which might be desired in that line."

Will you take any action you think fit ^{on the second para.} ~~and ask~~ after consulting Rackham (and ? Gadd).

Yours sincerely,

E. H. Keeling

EHK/JH



INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PERSIAN ART

ROYAL ACADEMY, LONDON, JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1931

HIS MAJESTY THE KING

Patrons:

HIS MAJESTY RIZA SHAH PAHLAVI

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e Member of Executive Committee

s Member of Selection Committee

f Member of a Foreign Committee

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PERSIAN ART

ROYAL ACADEMY, LONDON, JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1931



O THOSE WHO WERE PRIVILEGED TO SEE IT, THE ISLAMIC EXHIBITION OF 1910 AT MUNICH WAS A LANDMARK IN THE HISTORY OF ART. DURING THE TWENTY YEARS THAT HAVE ELAPSED MUCH HAS COME TO LIGHT WHICH WAS THEN UNKNOWN, INCLUDING MANY MASTERPIECES OF PERSIAN CERAMICS, TEXTILES AND MINIATURE PAINTING. THESE NEW DISCOVERIES WILL BE FULLY REPRESENTED IN THE EXHIBITION TO BE HELD IN THE ROYAL ACADEMY NEXT JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, WHICH WILL BE THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION OF PERSIAN ART EVER ASSEMBLED AND SHOULD BE NO UNWORTHY SUCCESSOR TO THE RECENT EXHIBITIONS OF FOREIGN ART IN THE SAME GALLERIES.

THE SELECTION WILL BE CONFINED TO OBJECTS WHICH ARE EITHER OF PURELY PERSIAN ORIGIN OR OWE A DIRECT DEBT TO PERSIAN IDEAS, AND THUS A COMPLETE SURVEY WILL BE MADE OF THE ART OF A COUNTRY ONCE ALL-POWERFUL IN HITHER ASIA AND STILL ILLUSTRIOUS IN ISLAM. TO MANY, "PERSIAN ART" MEANS ONLY CARPETS; TO SUCH PEOPLE THE BEAUTY OF PERSIAN GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE WORK, EMBROIDERY, BROCADES AND VELVETS, POTTERY, GLASS, MINIATURES, ILLUMINATED BOOKS, ARMS AND ARMOUR, SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE, WILL COME AS A REVELATION.

FEW COUNTRIES CAN BOAST OF SO LONG A HISTORY AS PERSIA, AND THE EXHIBITS WILL COVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL THOUSANDS OF YEARS. EXAMPLES OF THE ART OF THE FAR OFF DAYS WHEN DARIUS WAS KING, AND OF AN EVEN EARLIER AGE, WILL COMMENCE A SERIES WHICH PASSES THROUGH THE CAMPS OF ALEXANDER AND THE COURTS OF HARUN-AL-RASHID TO THE PALACE OF THE GREAT SHAH ABBAS AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

TO BRING TO LIFE AGAIN THE ART OF THIS ROMANTIC PAST THE MOST IMPORTANT MUSEUMS AND COLLECTORS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD HAVE GENEROUSLY CO-OPERATED. THE SHAH HAS AUTHORISED THE LOAN OF OBJECTS FROM THE IMPERIAL PALACES AND TREASURY, AND EVEN FROM FAMOUS MOSQUES WHICH NO EUROPEAN MAY ENTER. BY THE DESIRE OF KING FUAD THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT IS SENDING THE FINEST PERSIAN WORKS IN THE CAIRO MUSEUM. MANY TREASURES WILL COME FROM FRANCE, ITALY, GERMANY, SPAIN, AUSTRIA AND POLAND, WHILE SOME OF THE MOST MAGNIFICENT

CARPETS IN EXISTENCE, AND NUMEROUS OTHER OBJECTS, WILL RE-CROSS THE ATLANTIC. FROM RUSSIA IT IS HOPED TO OBTAIN SOME OF THE CELEBRATED SASANIAN SILVER AND GOLD PLATE, AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN PROGRESS FOR LOANS FROM OTHER COLLECTIONS. A LARGE NUMBER OF EXHIBITS WILL BE SHEWN PUBLICLY FOR THE FIRST TIME. ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT ARE BEING GIVEN BY THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PERSIAN ART AND ARCHÆOLOGY, THE ASSOCIATION FRANCAISE DES AMIS DE L'ORIENT, THE DEUTSCH-PERSISCHE GESELLSCHAFT, THE POLISH COMMITTEE, AND COMMITTEES IN PROCESS OF FORMATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

THE EXHIBITION WILL GIVE STUDENTS OF ART IN GENERAL, AND ORIENTALISTS IN PARTICULAR, AN UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE STUDY AND DISCUSSION OF MANY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS; DESIGNERS WILL HERE RECEIVE NEW INSTRUCTION AND INSPIRATION; WHILE THE GENERAL PUBLIC WILL FIND TRANSLATED INTO REALITY THE SETTING OF ITS CHILDHOOD'S DREAMS—THE WORLD OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

THE PUBLICATIONS ON SALE WILL INCLUDE AN OFFICIAL ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE. AFTER THE EXHIBITION AN EXHAUSTIVE SURVEY OF PERSIAN ART, WRITTEN BY SPECIALISTS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES, WITH 800 PAGES OF ILLUSTRATIONS, WILL BE PUBLISHED BY THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON PERSIAN ART, TO BE ATTENDED BY ORIENTAL SCHOLARS FROM EUROPE, THE UNITED STATES, ASIA AND EGYPT, WILL BE HELD DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF THE EXHIBITION.

JUNE, 1930.

Sept. 3rd 1930

Arthur Upham Pope Esq.,
London,
England.

Dear Pope:

My little chapter on the Parthian coinage is now completed and I am assembling the casts for the plates and have written to Paris and Berlin for certain important pieces to help out what the British Museum, the Numismatic Society and my own collections may have. It is important for me to know, however, just how many plates you can allow me, and this also depends upon the exact format of the plates. I would appreciate it therefore if you could let me know the exact size in inches of the space available on each plate for illustrations and also how many plates I am allowed. It is needless to point out to you that, particularly with regard to Parthian coins, the illustrations are more important than any text and so the more plates allowed the better. It might also be just as well to let me know the maximum size, or rather extent, you can allow for the text on Parthian coins. Having finished my article it struck me that perhaps I had exceeded the space allowed me. But with regard to Parthian coins I may say that, at present, they are about all that we possess for the period in question, and so are of exceptional importance. As it stands now my text comprises, very roughly indeed, about 7500 words. I could pare this down somewhat but would be reluctant to do so unless absolutely necessary.

I note by your recent letter that you are planning to be in New York in October. I am very anxious to see you and to talk over various matters. Could you possibly let me know a day or two in advance just what day I could see you? In this way we could not miss each other as I will still be living out of town. If I know what day you are free I will make arrangements to place the entire day at your disposal and will be glad to meet you at any time and place. I would rather see you in our beautiful new Numismatic Building (just completed) but no doubt your time will be pretty well occupied and you might find it difficult to come way up town to 155th street! But that is for you to decide.

At the first meeting of our Council this Fall I shall take great pleasure to place before them your request for an exhibition of Persian coins for the International Exhibition of Persian Art in London next winter. No doubt they will be glad to assist but probably would like to know something with regard to protection and insurance afforded. Can you give me any information with regard to this point?

Looking forward to seeing you shortly, I remain,
Very sincerely yours,



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Secretaries-General

E. H. Keeling, M.C.

Major A. A. Longden, D.S.O., O.B.E.

No.

dated 18th Sept. 1930

Dear Sir,

I am dealing with Mr. Pope's correspondence in his absence and have opened your letter to him dated 3rd instant.

I am sending the letter on to him, but can inform you now on behalf of the Committee that any coins which you are good enough to send will be fully insured, and the costs of transport paid.

Yours truly,

E. H. Keeling

Honorary Secretary-General

Edward T. Newell, Esq.
Broadway between 155th & 156th Street,
New York

EHK/LS



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Major A. A. Longden, D.S.O.

No. U 1 dated 15th July, 1930

E. T. Newell, Esq.,
American Numismatic Society,
156th Street,
New York City.

Dear Newell,

I understand the Committee have asked you to favour loans from the Society for the Persian Exhibition. I hope you can manage this, and that it meets with your own approval. I do not need to argue to you how essential Persian coinage is to an understanding of the history of Persian art, and if the Society will send a few pieces it will be a public service which all scholars will greatly appreciate. You see the second congress of Persian art will take place during the Exhibition, so you can be sure that any loans you could arrange for will be thoroughly studied and appreciated by competent observers.

I shall be over in October, and hope I will have better luck this time in seeing you.

There is no jam about your article for the Survey, but if it could come along some time in October or early November it would simplify our problems.

Best regards,

Arthur Upham Pope

AUP/JH